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# **Capps Passes Legislation for Critical Gaviota Coast Study**

## **Study to Protect Pristine, Undeveloped Coastline Included in Budget Bill**

Washington, DC -- Congresswoman Lois Capps today announced that legislation instructing the Interior Department to conduct a feasibility study of the Gaviota Coast passed the House, as part of the omnibus appropriations bill.

"This is great news for the Central Coast," said Capps. "As farming and ranching become increasingly threatened by urban sprawl, this study is a good first step toward preserving the Central Coast's environment and strong agricultural heritage."

The study was included after an intense lobbying effort by Capps, who had introduced the Gaviota Coast Act earlier this year. Capps' legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study into the feasibility of various preservation options for the Gaviota Coast. Specifically, the study will examine the area's natural, cultural, and recreational resources to determine if its suitable for inclusion in the National Park system. The Gaviota Coast, which stretches from Coal Oil Point to Point Sal, is one of the largest undeveloped coastal areas in California.

"I've been pleased to work with local ranchers, environmentalists and business leaders who have all come together in support of studying different ways to protect the pristine Gaviota Coast," said Capps. "We have a world class coastline right in our backyard and this study will help determine the best way to protect its cultural and historical significance."

A strong partnership between public and private groups has emerged to protect this area. The County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported the Gaviota Coast study and has pledged county matching funds. The Goleta Valley Land Trust and the Packard Foundation have also promised funding.

"This is a fine example of the federal government doing what it should do -- working in partnership with the local community to protect this unique resource," said Capps. "I am committed to ensuring that the public continues to be part of this important process. The success of the study will be dependent upon the active participation of a wide spectrum of interested groups and individuals."

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